FOR THE SAKE OF THIS FAMILY, IT IS OF THE UTMOST IMPOR-TANCE...
...TO GAIN THE FAVOR OF THE EMPEROR.
AND EVERY TIME...
...ALWAYS RIGHT THERE BESIDE ME...
THAT'S WHAT I'VE BEEN TOLD FROM WHEN I WAS VERY YOUNG.
...WAS A GIRL...
...WHO SHARED MY FACE.
Chapter 51

Chapter 51 A Third Turn at the Crystal Palace ②

WHAT'S ALL THIS FUSS?
OH! HIM AGAIN ...?
MURMUR
WHAT DOES HE THINK HE'S DOING HERE NOW?
MURMUR
THE CRYSTAL PALACE
ODD.
HE HAS KEPT HIS DISTANCE FROM THE CRYSTAL PALACE FOR NEARLY A YEAR.
HOW DARE HE SHOW HIS FACE NOW.
...WHO WAS ALLOWED TO CONTINUE BUMBLING AROUND THE INNER COURT WITHOUT PUNISHMENT AFTER HE LET THE CROWN PRINCE DIE.
THE UTTER INCOM-PETENT...
OH WELL. I'LL MAKE QUICK WORK OF THEM.
SHE WOULD NORMALLY BE ACCOMPANIED BY ANOTHER EUNUCH.
AND BEHIND HIM... A COURT LADY?

...THE NAME IS XING.
OHH!
DO YOU HAVE SOME BUSINESS HERE TODAY?
UH, YOU MUST BE THE HEAD LADY ...?
CRYSTAL PALACE HEAD LADY-IN-WAITING
XING
WE WOULD LIKE TO REQUEST AN AUDIENCE WITH THE WORTHY CONSORT...
ERM, WELL, NOW!
I CERTAINLY DON'T WANT TO HEAR THAT TITLE CROSS THIS CREATURE'S LIPS.
UGH.

WHISPER
OH...
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
...BUT I DO NOT BELIEVE LADY LIHUA WISHES TO SEE YOU AT THIS TIME.
MY HUMBLEST APOLO-GIES...
BONNNG
.....
...VERY WELL.
COME WITH ME.
W...
Jinshi
WE WERE GIVEN THIS LETTER TO BRING.

IS SOME-THING WRONG ...?
WHSPR WHSPR
WE WERE JUST WONDERING WHAT THAT SHED OVER THERE IS FOR.
...OH, NO.
IT IS BUT AN ORDINARY STORAGE SHED...

HAS ANY WORK BEEN DONE ON THE GARDEN HERE RECENTLY?
WHSPR
WHSPR
NO.
NOTHING BEYOND OUR USUAL GARDENER COMING AND TAKING CARE OF IT AS ALWAYS.
I SEE.
BUT NOW THAT WE'RE TALKING ABOUT IT...
DID THAT PARTICULAR PLANT ALWAYS GROW THERE?

LADY XING.
IT SEEMS YOU ARE WEARING PERFUME TODAY.
I APOLOGIZE FOR CAUSING OFFENSE THAT DAY.
IT HAS BEEN A WHILE SINCE WE LAST SAW EACH OTHER.
FWIP

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ガコッ
CLUNK
ガタ
RATTLE
ガタ
RATTLE
MISS!

DOC!
HOT WATER !!
WE NEED HOT WATER AT ONCE! PLEASE BOIL SOME FOR HER!
RIGHT AWAY, MISSY!

HERE.
DRINK THIS, NICE AND SLOW.
I'VE DONE NOTHING WRONG.
IT'S ONLY NATURAL TO ISOLATE THE SICK SO THAT THE ILLNESS DOES NOT SPREAD.
COUGH
COUGH
WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS TO HER?
IT'S TRUE THAT WHAT SHE HAS IS CONTA-GIOUS.
BUT IF YOU CONTINUE TREATING HER IN THIS MANNER...
...SHE WILL DIE.

...THE DEATH OF A LOWLY MAID IS AT BEST A MINOR INCONVENIENCE.
OF COURSE ...
YOU KNOW, WALKING INTO THIS SHED REMINDED ME...
...OF HOW YOU BURNED INCENSE WHEN CONSORT LIHUA WAS BED-RIDDEN...
...ALMOST AS IF...
...TO MASK THE SMELL OF THE SICK.
WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO SAY?

IT SEEMS TO BE THE OPPOSITE THIS TIME.
YOU'VE PLACED THIS SICK WOMAN HERE TO DISGUISE THE SCENT OF PERFUME.
!
INDIVIDUAL FRAGRANCES OR SPICES MAY NOT STAND OUT ON THEIR OWN...
...BUT WHEN SEVERAL TYPES ARE MIXED TOGETHER, THEY GIVE OFF A DISTINCTIVE SMELL.
...NO, STOP THIS!
THERE'S NOTHING OVER—

YOU LADIES OF THE CRYSTAL PALACE REALLY DO ENJOY HIDING THINGS, DON'T YOU?
MY, LOOK AT HOW MANY OF THE RECENTLY BANNED ITEMS FROM THE LAST CARAVAN YOU HAVE HERE.
SNIFF
SNIFF
KAPOP
SOME POOR EUNUCH IS ONCE AGAIN GOING TO FEEL THE BITE OF A WHIP OVER THIS.
LEER
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SO? WHAT WERE YOU PLANNING TO DO...
...ONCE YOU'D BREWED YOUR ABORTIVE CONCOC-TION?